

PRESS RELEASE

Congressman John Conyers, Jr.

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Conyers Decries GOP Failure to Investigate CIA Leak

Rep. John Conyers, Jr. issued the following statement after today's Judiciary Committee markup of H.Res. 499, which requires the Administration to turn over all documents relating to the disclosure of the identity and employment of Valerie Plame:

"For months the Congress has been aware of a shocking and shameful incident: the leaking of Valerie Plame's undercover agent status in retaliation for her husband's public disclosure that Iraq didn't buy nuclear weapons from Niger. I am sorry to say that the House Judiciary Committee abdicated its responsibility today to get to the bottom of who has risked the lives of those who protect our nation from terrorism and war. On a party line vote this morning, this Committee told members of our intelligence community that they're on their own by rejecting a resolution calling for disclosure of pertinent documents to the House of Representatives.

I am astounded that my Republican colleagues claim that legitimate Congressional oversight would interfere with the ongoing Justice Department investigation of this matter. This Congress has investigated Martha Stewart, Enron, Wen Ho Lee, the White House Travel Office and John Huang – all while there were pending criminal investigations.

In fact, this Committee has done it over and over and over. The Waco hearings took place during a number of criminal prosecutions. There were the INSLAW hearings. There was the campaign finance investigation, where this Committee forced the Justice Department to turn over internal documents about a number of pending investigations.

When it came to 30-year-old land deals in Arkansas or the suicide of Vince Foster or a private sexual affair, this Congress had an insatiable appetite for investigation. Now when it comes to the disclosure of national security secrets by high ranking White House officials, there is a sudden lack of appetite for fulfilling our constitutional oversight responsibility.

If the Republicans were really concerned about interference with the criminal investigation – and not the political consequences for the President – they wouldn't have rejected simple amendments that would have made sure that grand jury information was kept secret and that the special prosecutor be able to withhold any information that would jeopardize his case."

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